Introverts

Novelists Find a Field in the New Psychology

FICTION does not lag in making use of the new psychology and its new classifications. Here is J. D. Beresford, one of the most striking of the younger group of novelists in England, making a sally already into this attractive field. It is not a prolonged effort he makes, but it is illuminating of the possibilities of the new viewpoint.

"Nothing is more dispiriting than the practice of classifying humanity according to 'types.' Your professional psychologist does it for his own purposes.' This is his way of collating material for the large generalization he is always chasing. His ideal is a complete record. He would like to present us as so many samples on a labelled card—the differences between the samples on any one card being ascribed to an initial carelessness in manufacture. His method is the apotheosis of that of the gay Italian fortune teller one used to see about the streets, with her little cage of love-birds that sized you up and picked you out a suitable future. Presently, we hope, the psychologist will be able to do that for us with a greater discrimination. He will take a few measurements, test our reaction times, consult an index and hand us out an infallible analysis of our 'type.' After that we shall know precisely what we are fitted for, and whether our ultimate destination is the Woolsack or the Workhouse.

"But your psychologist has his uses, and it is the amateur in this sort, particularly the novel-writing amateur, who arouses our protest. He—I use the pronoun asexually—does not spend himself in prophecy, but he deals us out into packs with air of knowing just where we belong. And his novels prove how right he was, because you can prove anything of this kind in a novel. His readers like this method. It is easy to understand, and it provides them with an articulate description of the inevitable Jones.

"I cling to that as some justification for the habit, as an excuse for my own exhibition of the weakness, however dispiriting. It is so convenient to have a shorthand reference for Jones and another of our acquaintances. The proper understanding of any one of them might engage the leisure of a lifetime; and if for general purposes we can tuck our friends into some neat category, we serve the purposes of lucidity.

"Lastly, to conclude this apology, I would plead that a new scheme of classification, such as that provided by psychoanalysis, is altogether too fascinating to be resisted.

"There is, for example, my friend David Wince, the typical 'introvert,' and an almost perfect foil for my friend the 'extrovert,' previously described. The two men loathe the sight of one another. Contempt on one side and fear on the other is a sufficient explanation of their mutual aversion. Wince, indeed, has an instinctive fear of anything that bellows and a rooted distrust of most other things. He suffers from a kind of spiritual agoraphobia that makes him scared and suspicious of large generalizations, broad horizons and cognate phenomena. He likes, as he says, to be 'sure of one step' before he takes the next. The open distances of a political argument astound and terrify him. He takes all discussions with a great seriousness, and displays an obstructive passion for definition and the right use of words. 'What I should like to understand' is a favorite opening of his, and the thing he would like to understand is almost invariably some abstruse and fundamental definition.

"The a priori method is anathema to him. He is, in fact, characteristically unable to comprehend it. He has little respect for a syllogism as such, because his mind seems to work backward, and all his logical faculty is used in the dissection of premises. When my exasperation reaches the stage at which I say: 'But, my dear fellow, let us take it for granted, for the sake of argument . . .' he wrings his hands in despair and replies: 'But that's the whole point. We *can't* take these things for granted. If you don't examine your premises, where *are* you?' He has a habit in conversation of emphasizing such words as those I have underlined, and a look of desolation comes into his face when he plaintively inquires where we are. At those times I see his timid, irresolute spirit momentarily staring aghast at the threat of this world's immense distances before with a sigh of relief it ducks back into the shelter afforded by his introspective analyses. 'Let us be quite sure of our ground,' he says, 'before we draw any deductions.' His ground is, I fancy, a kind of 'dugout.'

"He has had an unfortunate matrimonial experience. His wife ran away with another man, some three or four years ago, and he is trying to screw himself up to the pitch of divorcing her. For a man of his sensitiveness the giving of evidence in court upon such a delicate subject will be a very trying ordeal. He has confided very little of his trouble to me, but occasional hints of his, and the reports of another friend who knew Mrs. Wince personally, lead me to suppose that she was rather a large-minded, robust sort of woman. Perhaps he bored her. I can imagine that he would bore any one who had a lust for action; and as they had been married for eight years and had no children, I am not prepared to condemn Mrs. Wince, offhand, for her desertion of him. I have no doubt that Wince might be able to make out a good ethical case for himself. I picture his attitude toward his wife as being extremely self-denying, deprecatory and almost passionately virtuous. But I prefer to reserve judgment on the issue between them. . . .

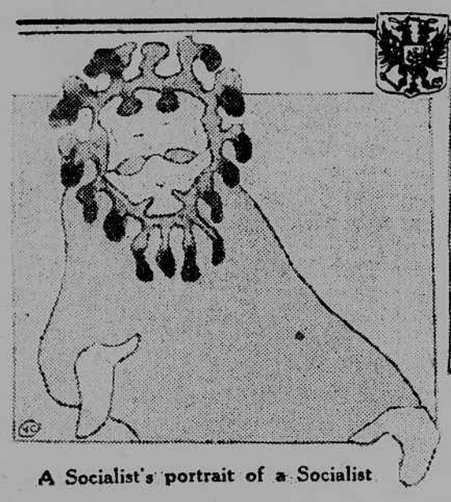
"He adores courage, but only when it is the self-conscious kind. Our friend Bellows, for instance, does not appear to Wince as brave, but as callous, thick-skinned, or 'simply a braggart.' All Wince's resentment comes to the surface when the two men meet by some untoward accident. On one such occasion he magnificently left the room and slammed the door after him, but I think that he probably regretted that act of violence before he reached home. He has a nervous horror of making enemies. He need have had no fear in this case. Bellows considers Wince as beneath his notice, and always speaks of him to me as 'your hair-splittin' friend.'

"Now that I have documented Wince I feel chiefly sorry for him, but when I am in his company I frequently feel a strong desire to shake him. I wonder if his wife began by being sorry for him, and if her escapade was incidentally intended as a shaking? Did she flaunt her wickedness at him in the hope of 'rousing him up'? If so, she failed, ignominiously. Shakings of that sort only aggravate his terror of life. Indeed, I do not think that anything can be done for him. If he survives the war, the coming of the new democracy will certainly finish him. Talking of the possibility of a November election, he told me that he meant to abstain from voting. He said that he could not vote for Lloyd George, and was afraid of putting too much power into the hands of the Labor party. He did not think that they had yet had enough experience of government to be trusted with the control of a nation.

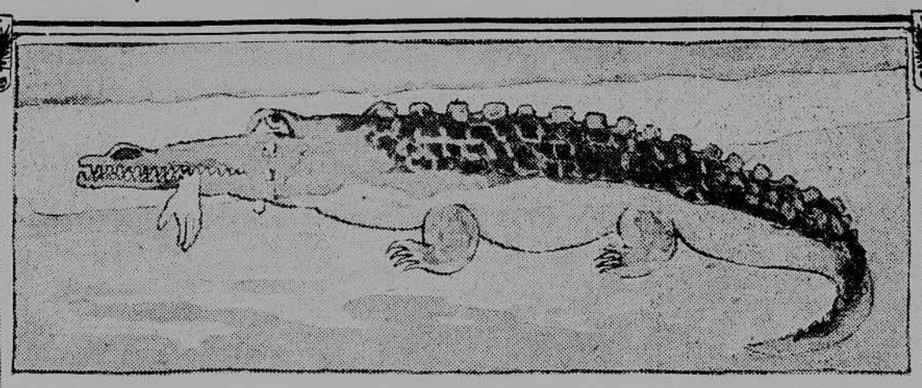
"In the hallowed protections of the Victorian era he had his place and throve after his fashion. Life was so secure and the future apparently so certain. But he was not fitted to stand the strain of coming out into the open. He is horrified by the war, but in his heart he is still more horrified by the thought of the conditions that will come with peace. He sees the future, I know, as a vast, formless threat. He sees life exposed to a great gale of revolution. He is afraid that his retreat will be no longer available, that one day he will find his burrow stopped and himself called upon to face, and to work with, his fellowmen.

"But, no doubt, his natural timidity tends to overestimate the probability of these dangers."

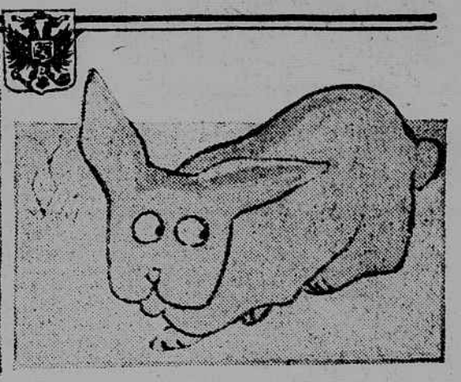
Russian Art Takes a Slant Toward Satire



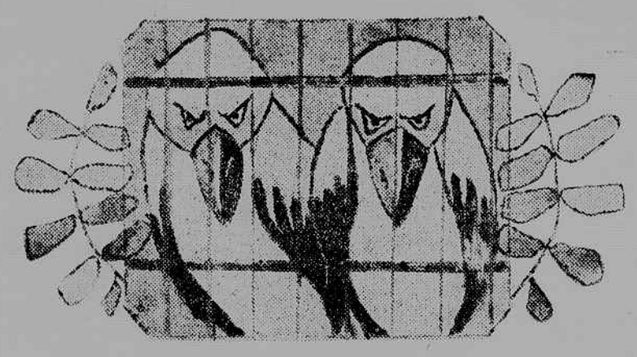
A Socialist's portrait of a Socialist



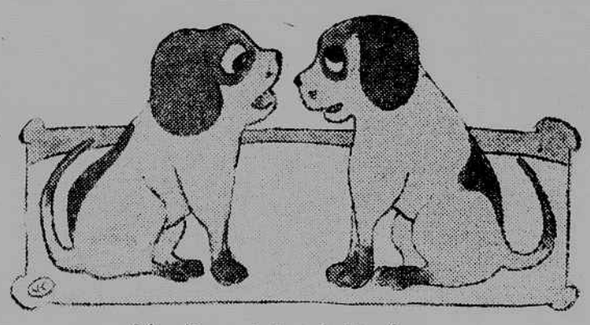
Democracy swallowing autocracy



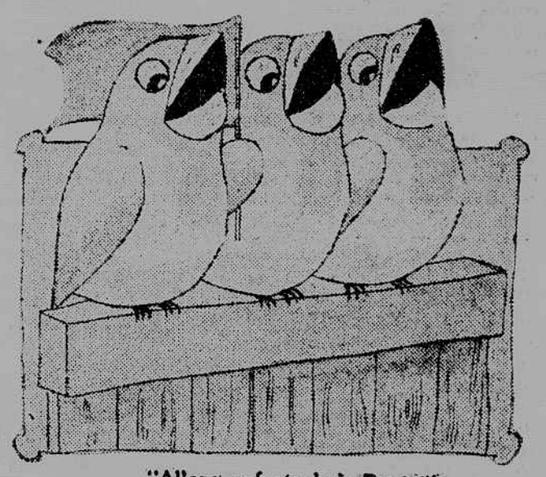
The timid Russian Liberal



The birds of spring have been caged



The disappointing election law
—Not universal?
—No, not universal.
—Not direct?
—No, not direct.
—They fooled us, brother!

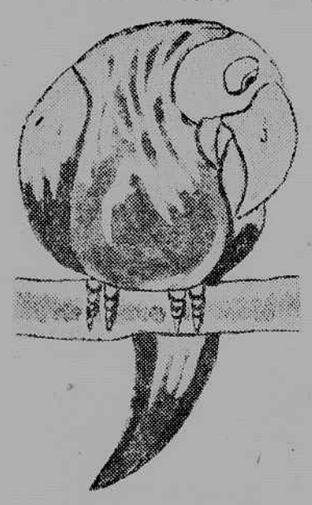


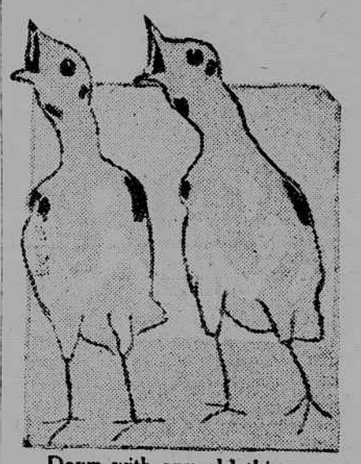
"Allons, enfants de la Patrie!"

O Tempora! O Mores!

REVOLUTIONARY art antedated the several present revolutions by a good many years. The art that has come out of these movements of human revolt—if these Russian postcards are to be taken as an indication—is marked chiefly by its satire rather than by any great qualities of imagination. There are always wheels within wheels, and even revolutionists have a hundred disagreements between themselves. The postcards reproduced here are from Bolshevik Russia, and they express more graphically than words the public reactions to the events transpiring there.

Parroting the franchise formula
Universal, direct, equal, secret





Down with any old thing.
Hurrah for anything new!

THE MEETING—A French War Tale

Translated by William L. McPherson

Here is a story with a true war atmosphere of interrupted and recovered romance. It is a case in which fiction is neither stranger than truth nor truth stranger than fiction. The war has separated and rejoined friends, families and lovers in countless ways. It has given a new pang to partings and a new thrill to rediscovery and reunion.

In this story it is not so much the situation that counts as the simple and natural manner in which it is handled.

ODILE BASTIEN, having knotted her veil and put on her gloves, descended her four flights to the street. Elbowed by the innumerable soldiers who filled the approaches to the Eastern Railway station with a shifting panorama of uniforms of horizon blue, she quickly gained the stairway of the "Metro." (the Paris subway).

Undoubtedly it wasn't an agreeable neighborhood, overrun by this crowd of furloughed men of all descriptions and the equivocal world which they attracted. Nevertheless she kept her little lodging in the Rue de Strasbourg, unwilling to quit that quarter of the city which seemed to her to be closest to Alsace. Those trains, whose long, mournful tootings and wheezings she heard every night, were going down there—toward Belfort, toward Dannemarie, toward Mulhouse.

She had alighted in this corner of Paris a chilly early spring evening in 1915. She had left Mulhouse in a panic, terrified at finding herself alone and at the mercy of the Germans, whose rage against the Alsatians was without limits from the time that the latter had received the French army with delirious enthusiasm.

Odile was young, pretty and unprotected. Her husband and her parents were dead and her fiancé had left Alsace. All her natural guardians were dead or gone.

In the train which carried her along noisily through the dark tunnel of the "Metro." Odile thought of her brief past, which now seemed to her enveloped in blackness, like Mulhouse itself, that city of a hundred factories.

Her story was very simple and, up to the outbreak of the war, very commonplace. She was the daughter of an accountant in a big industrial establishment, and at nineteen years had married a young colleague of her father's, Albert Bastien, who, they told her, was an ideal husband for her, having an assured future. But the future—who knows it? And how foolish it is to discount it! Two years later her husband, whose health the confinement of office life had undermined, died of pneumonia, caught while leaving the factory one bitter cold night.

Odile, a widow at twenty-one, felt no very great grief, because, without knowing just why, she had never really loved Albert. With her widowed father she continued to live the same monotonous life, full of long, empty days, until she met Paul by chance at a friend's house.

Paul! In what way was he different from the others? Why, whenever she saw him, did she have a novel and indefinable feeling, a sort of uneasiness, a sense of fascination? Often in reading novels (for she had the calm and practical spirit of the Alsatians) she had scoffed at "love at first sight." One should not rail at love. Sooner or later the little god takes his revenge. This "love at first sight" was exactly what trapped her in her turn—her, the reasonable, unromantic Odile!

He was an industrial designer, because his lack of force did not permit him to become a painter. So he indulged in the illusion of being an artist by imagining for his tapestry and upholstery stuffs richly decorative compositions with flower motives.

She met him often. She knew that he loved her before he told her so and asked her to be his wife. She accepted with joy, seeing a long perspective of happiness opening before her. They were to be married in September, 1914.

. . . . . .

In the last days of July, when war seemed imminent, Paul came to tell her that he was going to Belfort while there was still a chance to go. He begged her to go with him and to take her father along. But the latter absolutely refused to leave his beloved Mulhouse.

"I want to be here to receive the French," he said, obstinately. They could not persuade him, and Odile, not wishing to abandon him, stayed behind with him. Paul intended to join the French army and to go to the front. She would not see him again. She would have been left all alone in a strange city if she had accompanied him. Undoubtedly her fiancé would soon return to Mulhouse with the victorious French.

But no, he was not one of the fortunate ones who, transported with enthusiasm, were received at Mulhouse by a population beside itself. He never knew the intoxication of that welcome—the brilliant dream which was to be followed by so tragic an awakening.

That awakening was the counter offensive of the Germans, the battle of Dornach, the savage reprisals at the expense of the Mulhousians, faithless subjects of the German Empire. What evil prompting induced Odile's father to go out to see what was happening in the streets and to make some indiscreet comments? Stood up against a wall, he paid with his life for that imprudence.

His daughter experienced the anguish of waiting for him in vain, the grief of hearing of his cruel fate, the terror of finding herself alone thereafter, facing those unchained hordes, those masters more than ever implacable. She remained some time uncertain what to do. Then in February, 1915, she profited by a permission to leave Mulhouse granted reluctantly to a few women and children.

Those who don't know where to go, whom nothing attracts anywhere else, drift to Paris, the city of mirages. It is the place where one has the best chance to find again any one who has dropped out of sight. But in spite of all her efforts Odile had obtained no news of Paul. The bureaus could not tell her in what army he served. Without doubt he had changed his name, as most of the Alsatian volunteers did. Advertisements inserted in the newspapers brought no results.

Now again, on her way to a new bureau, Odile turned and returned in her mind that insoluble enigma while the Metropolitan train ran through its tunnel, stopped, started again, unwearyingly continuing the monotony of long gray walls, broken only here and there by a big poster or an electric light.

Another station. This time the train going in the opposite direction also stops, the two so close that they seem to touch each other. From one car to another the passengers stare across, with the dull, repressed air of people who wait uncomfortably in some public place. Odile lifts her eyes mechanically. Suddenly she starts. There, separated from her only by the thickness of two panes of glass, a young man is talking to a young woman seated on a bench beside him.

That face, those eyes, that brown mustache! It is Paul!

Is it he really? In civilian's clothes, with a strange woman?

As if he felt that glance which devoured him the passenger across the way lifts his eyes, meets those of Odile, starts—he, too—with a brief and mute glance of recognition and a slight gesture, like an appeal. Then his train gets under way and carries him off, submerging him anew in that bottomless ocean which is Paris.

. . . . . .

Several days passed—black, empty days, without purpose and without horizon, almost without thought; for one could hardly call thought that tumult of confused and despairing ideas which raged in Odile's brain. Nothing to look forward to; everything in ruin; Paul another woman's; Paul a civilian in Paris; herself alone and abandoned; alone for all her life.

Then one morning the bell rings and there Paul stands before her, not at all confused, or hesitating or contrite, but full of ardor and passion, talking with an energy so compelling that she no longer knows what to think, that she finds no words with which to question him, that she feels herself overwhelmed and carried along like a pebble in a raging, irresistible flood.

What is he saying? He has tried to communicate with her at Mulhouse, but has not succeeded. His letters apparently never reached her. Since he has known she was in Paris he has searched for her, and has found her at last with the aid of the bureau of visitors' permits at the Prefecture. He has always loved her, loves her more than ever, has never loved any one else. His companion of the other day? She doesn't count. A casual acquaintance whom he will never see again. When one is too much alone he sometimes does foolish things.

Soon he will be able to draw with his left hand. Yes, like Daniel Vierge. You can do that when you have lost your right hand. With a careless gesture he shows her his empty sleeve, which she had not seen at first. Then she notices also in his buttonhole two little ribbons interwoven, one green and red, the other green and yellow. But then?

"Yes. I was mustered out after the amputation. It happened at the Marne. I will tell you all about it when we are married. For we shall marry at once. We shall love each other always—always more and more. We are pledged to each other forever."

He draws her close to him. He bends over. And because women always forgive, because life is so dark when one is all alone, because he is brave and mutilated, and also because she cannot resist his conquering talk and gestures, Odile, unresistingly, without an answer, lays her head on the shoulder of the friend she has found again.

But as he bends toward her face she veils with her eyelids the mystery in her eyes, which two tears have moistened with joy.

In the Shadow

Many Legends of Old Houses and Their Spirits

GILBERT CHESTERTON proclaims his mysticism, so nobody ought to be surprised to find Katharine Tynan talking about haunted houses in his weekly, "The New Witness."

"It may be stated as a broad fact that all houses once inhabited and standing empty are haunted houses, haunted by those who have lived in them and their deeds, and standing in the same relation to those who have gone out of them as the corpse does to the spirit which has left it. We are all afraid of emptiness at the core of us. You know the eeriness of echoing footsteps in an empty house. Nothing tenanted has so much power to daunt us unless it be a grave.

"In an empty house we are in the midst of a void. In the fields or woods at night we are in the thick of life, and the heaven above us is populated with suns and worlds. Wherefore to spend a night out of doors is far from being as terrifying an experience even to the nervous as a night in an empty house.

"You will find that most haunted houses are houses that have long stood empty, and from the mere terrifying fact of their emptiness has sprung in time a whole mass of myth and legend.

"But apart from that, there are houses which affect one curiously, from which as soon as the door is opened a strange breath comes out to tell you, 'This house is haunted.' You may sometimes savor it in a red brick villa which could have had only one or two occupations. You will not savor it at all in certain old country houses of great age, where people have lived and loved and suffered and died, and sinned and repented for many generations. You will savor something wholesome and sweet by which one conjectures that the house, if it has had the common lot and harbored sinners as well as saints, has been washed clean by many prayers. Sometimes a living personality will influence a house as much for the time as the dead folk who have gone out of it. Such a one died some years ago in an English manor house, an old lady well on in the eighties. She breathed all the enchanted fragrance of Shakespeare's England, without the shadows and discords which are lost for us in the play of lights and the full chorus. She was descended from a great Elizabethan. While she lived the beautiful old house, the garden with its pleached alleys and the fish pond were but her setting. The frame from which she stepped forth must be sadly changed to-day.

"Not so far away is a house giving on a riverside street, a house which was there when Shakespeare lived, under whose cedars, upon whose lawns the great Elizabethan procession laughed and talked and walked—a beautiful old house, and the gardens inviolate to this day; but as you enter its doors the thing that comes forth to meet you is evil. The house belonged to a king's mistress, of a quite exceptional dissoluteness and cruelty. Her picture is fixed in the wall at the head of a staircase—a wild, laughing, beautiful thing with floating curls, décolleté as only Sir Peter Lely's sitters were. She had been so evil to all who loved her that the king who undertook her must have been as reckless as His Satanic Majesty. Kate the queen comes from her picture frame at times to glide by the young and whisper evil in their ears, and when that happens may the good angel of the one she whispers to be vigilant. . . .

"Superstition is the shadow of religion, and where superstition is there must be something lacking in the religion, to say the least. Superstition is most terrifying and takes its grossest form among pagans. But, apart from that, when religion has left an empty house superstition rushes in to fill the void. I have known a bishop's daughter, who had shuffled off Christianity as being unworthy an intelligent person's consideration, turn pale at seeing the new moon through glass, and faint because the bells had rung without apparent cause. So, too, the table turning, the spirit rapping, planchette and all the rest of the things by which a foolish generation plays with the things of the other world.

"Yet among the Celtic peoples, side by side with religion, there is the belief in ghosts. Said a very wholesome specimen of an Irish priest to me the other day: 'I met So-and-So the night he died. I was walking home up Gallows Hill, and I saw him coming along with his head down; and I said to him: "Tom, where are you going to this time of night? I heard you weren't well. It's in your bed you ought to be." Not a word at all he said, but went by me. I said to Father John the next morning: "I met Tom So-and-So in the street last night and he wouldn't speak to me. I wonder what at all I've done on him." "Sure, the poor fellow's dead," said Father John. "His death's in the paper this morning. He died in the night."'

"Such a tale as this is told very simply and with no suggestion of anything unusual.

"But to our haunted houses! In the town I know best there are many such.

"The haunted house which gives you due warning is one thing. The haunted house which hides itself under a drab, everyday exterior is in a sense more sinister. I know a little suburban two-storied house among cheerful commonplace neighbors, which has a weird ghost—a ghost that walks by daylight, and preferably in the early morning. A new servant going downstairs very early in the morning after her arrival will see going before her a lady in her nightgown, so palpable, so actual that she can describe the very lace which trims it. She thinks it is her mistress going down in the gray dusk of the morning for something she requires, when—somewhere in the lower regions the figure fades into mist—is gone. The house is stuccoed and rather sad of a summer evening when the rain streaks the walls like green tears; it is probably a hundred years old, and it is reputed to have a well fifty feet deep below the house. But in the companion houses cheerful young clerks and shopmen and their wives and families live after their manner. In the dusk of the evening as a man comes from town he may see the lady of the nightgown, or the negligée, sitting by the window of an upper room, shadowy as the dusk itself."